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SUBJECT: LETTER FROM FAMILY OF MARGARET HASSAN

1.(U) This is an action request. See Paragraph 3.

2. (SBU) Post's Consular Section received today a copy of a letter from Mrs. Geraldine Fitzsimons Riney, the sister of Margaret Hassan, the British/Irish citizen who was taken hostage and murdered in Iraq in November 2004, addressed to the Irish Prime Minister (Taoiseach), Mr. Bertie Ahern. The verbatim text of the message follows:

(begin quote)  
Killowen East  
Kenmare  
Co. Kerry  
17th November 2005

An Taoiseach  
Mr. Bertie Ahern, T.D.  
Department of the Taoiseach  
Government Buildings  
Upper Merrion Street  
Dublin 2

Dear Mr. Ahern,

As I am sure you are aware, prisoners that were held in Baghdad by the Iraqi Interior Ministry are now in the custody of American troops. My family has reason to believe that three of the prisoners are men who were held on suspicion of Margaret's kidnap and murder. They were arrested on May 1st 2005, because they were in possession of Margaret's belongings and admitted to knowledge of her kidnapping. Until now, we have been told that only the Iraqi Police could interrogate these men. As the Americans now hold them, and the Iraqi Interior Ministry no longer have them in their custody; may I appeal to you to ask the American authorities in Iraq to question these men properly? Margaret's husband Tahseen has asked me to appeal to you for help in bringing pressure to bear on the American Military who hold these prisoners. The men held must know what happened to Margaret as they were in possession of her belongings.

My family's dearest wish is to recover Margaret's remains. And, I am sure that you like us would like to see those responsible for her death brought to justice. To date the only people with information are the men arrested and it is imperative that they are questioned as soon as possible. We continue to seek justice for Margaret Hassan.

Yours sincerely,  
Geraldine Fitzsimons Riney

c.c. Dermot Ahern, T.D.  
Minister for Foreign Affairs (end quote)

3. (SBU) The Margaret Hassan murder attracted much media attention in Ireland, and, as a result, her tragic death was widely followed here. Ms. Riney's letter was forwarded to us by the consular department of the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs, without comment. Although the Irish government has not yet asked us to respond to or act on Ms. Riney's requests, we request guidance on what we can tell the GOI and or Hassan's family directly. Given the fact that events related to her murder continue to be of high interest to the Irish people and government, as forthcoming an approach as possible would be helpful.

KENNY